



A Message
From
The
Secretary

Keeping children safe and healthy is a priority for KDHE and as a result we are in the process of implementing new regulations to change immunization requirements for school entry to include Hepatitis B and Varicella (chicken pox). These vaccinations are currently required in many other states and are important in protecting children against these illnesses. The new requirements for school entry become effective in Kansas for the 2004-2005 school year pending a public hearing this month and the final adoption of the new regulations.

In another step to protect Kansas children, our SAFE KIDS Program received a \$10,000 grant from State Farm Insurance this week for the purpose of bike rodeos and helmet distribution programs in the state. Located in the KDHE Office of Health Promotions, the SAFE KIDS program coordinates many different efforts to reduce injuries to children.

KDHE's *Meth Watch Program* continues to gain the attention of other states in its efforts to curb the sale of products used to make methamphetamine. City, county and state government officials in 12 states have reviewed the Kansas *Meth Watch Program* and in many cases implemented similar plans in their states. Look for the Kansas *Meth Watch* decal in many retail stores around the state. These stores have agreed to notify law enforcement if a customer is purchasing a large number of products routinely used in meth production. Our *Meth Watch Program* also is responsible for cleaning up sites where meth labs have been discovered.

In an effort to recognize the state's achievements in the area of solid waste disposal, recycling and environmental improvements, KDHE will sponsor the 10th annual WORKS! conference in Lindsborg. It's the home of the first WORKS! conference and will feature key note speaker Bill Kurtis, Kansas native and national broadcaster, in addition to an African delegation. The event is March 23-25.

I am excited about the many projects KDHE is undertaking to improve the health of Kansans and the state of the environment as well as our organization. The efforts could not be made without the hard work of a qualified, dedicated staff as well as the invaluable input from the public and the many community partners who make our programs a success throughout Kansas.

Be Well,